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ABSTRACT

INDEX

FILE NUMBER (PRIMARY CODE)

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6 JAN 67

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Federal Bureau of Investigation JAN 25 1967

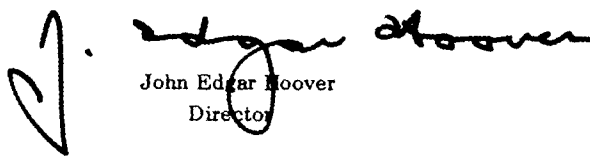
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

ATTENTION: Deputy Director, Plans

Dear Sir:

- ☒ 1. For your information, I am enclosing communications which may be of interest to you.
- ☒ 2. No further investigation is contemplated with regard to this matter.
- ☐ 3. You will be advised of the pertinent developments in connection with this inquiry.
- ☐ 4. Please note change in caption of this case.
- ☒ 5. Status of case: ☒ Completed ☐ Incomplete

Very truly yours,


John Edgar Hoover
Director

Enc. 2

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In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
New York, New York

January 6, 1967

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⑥ Heinrichs L. Bagatais
Internal Security - R - Latvia

Heinrichs L. Bagatais, also known as Henry Bagatais, advised Special Agents (SAs) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on October 25, 1966, that he was most anxious that his name be cleared of vicious rumors, which he stated he knew had been circulating in Latvian circles in New York City, concerning his spying activities for the Soviets. He emotionally branded these rumors as completely untrue and indicated that he had been deeply hurt by them. He expressed admiration for, and gratitude to, the United States, and he indicated that he truly wanted to see his native Latvia liberated from the yoke of Soviet domination.

Bagatais stated that he believed those vicious spy rumors about him might have gotten started within the Daugavas Vanagi (DV) and then spread throughout Latvian circles in New York City.

A characterization of the DV is contained in the appendix attached hereto.

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Bagatais said that he was a current member of the DV, although an inactive one, and he indicated that he had been President of the New York Chapter of the DV on two separate occasions in the past.

Bagatais then indicated his belief that the vicious spy rumors about him may have gotten started because of his first trip to Australia in December, 1959, which may have lead certain individuals to believe he had come into possession of an unexplainable large amount of money, which was not consistent with his employment. He said that he had taken four weeks accumulated vacation from the Roux Company, for whom he had worked for about 12 years in order to make this trip possible.

Bagatais explained his apparent affluence by relating that he had never been married and, prior to this December, 1959 trip, he had shared an apartment at 412 Cathedral Parkway, New York City, with Elmar Erickson and Mrs. Irene Nadzina, thereby cutting his living expenses considerably. As a result, he had succeeded in saving \$1,000.00 prior to this December, 1959 trip and had borrowed another \$1,000.00 from the First National City Bank of New York for the trip.

According to Bagatais, the occasion for his trip to Australia in December, 1959, had been the confirmation of the oldest daughter of his sister, Lucia Senkolovics, and he had visited Europe, India, and Singapore, prior to his arrival in Australia, with all of his travel being by airplane, and the start and finish of the trip having been by jet airplane.

Bagatais further advised that he had gone to Australia again in 1962, this time with the full intention of residing there permanently. Prior to this trip, he

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had sold all the furnishings in his apartment and had vacated his apartment. In addition, he had also borrowed another \$1,000.00 from the First National City Bank of New York, which he intended to repay once he became settled in Australia.

According to Bagatais, he had sold his apartment furnishings to Doctor Seymour Saltefors, a Medical Doctor, who had resided at 412 Cathedral Parkway, New York City, until his death about one year ago.

Bagatais advised that after having spent about ten months in Australia, he had come to the realization that a man with his disability just could not make any money there, so he had returned to the United States in April, 1963. Upon his return to the United States, he had stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Elmar Erickson in Los Angeles, California, Bagatais indicating that Erickson, one of those who had formerly shared an apartment with him, had gotten married and moved to Los Angeles, California.

Bagatais continued that after about one month in Los Angeles, he had returned to New York City, because he had been unable to find suitable employment, as it seemed that one needed a car for any potential job out there. Upon his return to New York City, Bagatais was successful in obtaining an apartment again at 412 Cathedral Parkway, New York City, namely, apartment 122 on the 12th floor, in which apartment he presently continues to reside.

Bagatais advised that, upon his return to New York City, he had unsuccessfully attempted to be re-employed by the Roux Company, but he had eventually obtained a position with the International Flavors and Fragrances, Incorporated, his present employer, where he is now in charge of the Mail Department and Messenger Service.

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According to Bagatais, he has two men currently sharing his apartment with him namely, Sudesa Kapoor, who pays \$75.00 a month, and Michael Royer, who pays \$65.00 a month, but he was not aware as to where either of them were employed. Bagatais added that through the economy feature of this apartment expense sharing, as well as the fact that he had successfully obtained many bargains through the furniture auctions which he was in the habit of frequenting, he had again been able to adequately and tastefully furnish his apartment.

Bagatais emphasized that he had never been employed by any travel agency, and he further indicated that he had never even represented a travel agency in any capacity. He thought that his aforementioned two trips to Australia might have lead people to believe he had some connection with a travel agency.

Bagatais related that prior to his last trip to Australia in 1962, parties had been held in his apartment by Elmar Erickson and himself about every two weeks, with those in attendance having been mostly Latvians who were friends of Erickson. According to Bagatais, since his return to New York City from Australia in 1963, parties in his apartment have been most infrequent. Bagatais recalled only one military serviceman who had attended any of these parties, namely, Edward Rubans, who had been in the United States Air Force for three of four years, and had married a wealthy girl from New Jersey, but they subsequently had been divorced.

Bagatais also advised that Elza Zebranska, an opera singer, who is the wife of John Kugis, the owner of Allen's Bar on 14th Street in New York City, had been in the United States since before World War II, but has a sister and brother still residing in Soviet Latvia. The subject said that Zebranska resided at 50 Central Park West, New York City, and also maintained a residence in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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According to Bagatais, Zebranska formerly had sung at DV concerts, but she had made trips to Soviet Latvia on two occasions to see her relatives, before such trips began to become commonplace when Soviet Latvia was actually opened to tours from the United States. After her return from these trips, Zebranska had been isolated by the Latvian emigre circles in New York City, since she had become a suspect due to these trips. During this isolation of Zebranska, whereby she had become quite sensitive, and would not sing, Bagatais indicated that he had escorted her to a concert at Town Hall in New York City, when he was President of the New York Chapter of DV.

Bagatais thought that his close association with Zebranska, after she had been isolated by Latvian emigre circles in New York City, and while he was President of the New York Chapter of the DV, might also have been instrumental in the starting of rumors that he was engaging in spying activities for the Soviets.

Bagatais stressed that he had no desire to visit Soviet Latvia at the present time, as he was perfectly happy residing in the United States as a naturalized citizen and very contented in his present employment. He also again expressed his desire to see the liberation of his native Latvia from Soviet domination.

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APPENDIX

1.

DAUGAVAS VANAGI (DV)

A confidential source, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that the Daugavas Vanagi (DV) (Falcons of Daugava) was an organization of former Latvian soldiers who fought as a unit with the Germans against the Russians in 1943 - 1944, and became known as the Latvian Legion. According to this confidential source, after World War II, these veterans organized themselves into a veterans' organization known as the DV.

This confidential source continued that the purposes of this organization were the same as those generally associated with veterans' organizations, such as fraternalism, mutual aid and assistance, and to arrange for the care of those veterans who had been wounded or disabled during the Russian campaign.

This confidential source advised that the headquarters of the DV, known as the Central Board of Officers, was established in Germany, as most of the Latvian Legionnaires, and practically all of the disabled veterans, were located in Germany. However, many of the able veterans emigrated to other countries, where they organized local branches of the DV.

This confidential source indicated that, during the years immediately following World War II, because of the Latvian Legion's association with the German Army, the members of the Legion were excluded from entering the United States as Displaced Persons. However, in about 1950, some Latvians in the United States, who were sympathetic toward the Latvian Legionnaires and their organization, DV, as well as the DV's efforts to assist disabled Latvian veterans, began to form informal groups throughout the United States, which groups eventually became known as the Falcons of Daugava of DV.

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2.

DAUGAVAS VANAGI (DV) (Cont'd)

This confidential source explained that, even though the Latvian Legion had fought alongside the German forces, many patriotic Latvians did not regard the Latvian Legion as German collaborators, but rather as Latvian heroes, who had fought the Russians, not for the purpose of assisting the Germans in any manner whatsoever, but for the sole purpose of fighting Communism and preventing the Russians from invading Latvia. The fact that, at the same time, the Germans were also fighting a war of their own with the Russians, was regarded as coincidental, and the alliance between the Latvian Legion and the German forces was generally regarded as one of necessity, rather than desire.

This confidential source said that, in 1951, the restrictions against former members of the Latvian Legion entering the United States were lifted. As a result, a number of these Legionnaires came to the United States and joined the various informal groups of DV, which had already been established. In addition to these groups, they also formed a number of new branches. However, since there were not enough actual members of the Latvian Legion to create an effective organization, about one year previously, membership in the United States organization of the DV was opened to all Latvians, both men and women, regardless of whether or not they had been actual fighting members of the Latvian Legion in Latvia. This confidential source estimated that, at that time, there were about 15 to 20 branches in various parts of the United States, with a membership of from 400 to 600, and all of the branches were known by the same name, that is, DV or the Falcons of Daugava.

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3.

DAUGAVAS VANAGI (DV) (Cont'd)

This confidential source continued that regular meetings of the DV were held and an intraorganizational bulletin was published. Principal activities consisted of social affairs, such as picnics, dances, and other functions, all held for the purpose of raising money to be sent to Germany, where it was to be used for the care of veterans of the Latvian Legion, who had been wounded and disabled in the Russian campaign.

This confidential source stated that the DV was militantly anti-Communist and supported all activities tending toward the eventual liberation of Latvia from Soviet Union.

A second confidential source, who has furnished reliable information in the past, has advised that the second largest and most active Latvian organization in the United States is the DV, a Latvian veterans' organization, which is anti-Communist.

According to this second confidential source, the DV has about 55 branches, and the majority of heads of the branches are former career Latvian Army officers.